

The High Plains Drifter

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4TH ANNUAL LIGHTNING SAFETY AWARENESS WEEK

LIGHTNING KILLS, PLAY IT SAFE!

Lightning is the #2 cause of storm related deaths in the U.S., killing more people than tornadoes or hurricanes. Lightning also inflicts life-long debilitating injuries on many more than it kills. Fortunately, most lightning deaths and injuries are easily avoided. Remember, ***NO PLACE OUTSIDE IS SAFE NEAR A THUNDERSTORM!***



Photo taken in Monroe, LA on July 17th 2003
Courtesy of Derek Deroche

Lightning Safety Awareness Week is June 20-26, 2004. The first step in lightning safety is to plan your outdoor activities to avoid as much of the lightning threat as you can. Watch the local weather forecasts and know your local weather patterns. The forecast from the National Weather Service office in North Platte can be found at www.crh.noaa.gov/lbf.

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The safest place from lightning is inside a large, fully enclosed building with wiring and plumbing, e.g. a typical house. Stay away from any conducting path to the outside: corded telephones; electrical appliances; and plumbing. Don't watch lightning from doorways or windows. If you can't get to a house, a vehicle with a metal roof and metal sides is a good second choice. Roll-up the windows, lean away from the door, and don't touch any conducting path going outside, e.g. radio, keys in the ignition, steering wheel, etc. Remember, it's not the rubber tires insulating you from the ground that make vehicles safe, but rather the metal shell that conducts the electricity around you -- convertibles, motorcycles, cars made of fiberglass and plastic, and open shelled outdoor recreation

vehicles don't count. If you can't get to a house or vehicle, then at least avoid the most hazardous places and activities. Stay off elevated places, like buildings, high playground equipment, etc. Keep away from open areas. Get away from tall isolated objects like trees. Going under trees to keep dry is the 2nd leading cause of lightning casualties in the U.S. Stop water-related activities, including swimming, boating, and fishing. Get off of open vehicles like cabin-less tractors, bulldozers, four-wheel recreational vehicles, etc. But remember, ***NO PLACE OUTSIDE IS SAFE NEAR A THUNDERSTORM.*** You are much safer going inside a house or car. If you are caught outside and your hair starts standing on end or you feel a tingling sensation on your skin, lightning is about to strike! Immediately, crouch down into a small ball to make as small a target as possible.

Lightning is definitely the underrated thunderstorm threat. While no set of guidelines can give you 100% guaranteed safety from lightning, the procedures discussed above can help you avoid the majority of lightning casualties. For more information on lightning safety, visit www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov.



Photo taken in South Louisiana on May 1st
Courtesy of Derek Deroche

NOAA WEATHER RADIO

NWR

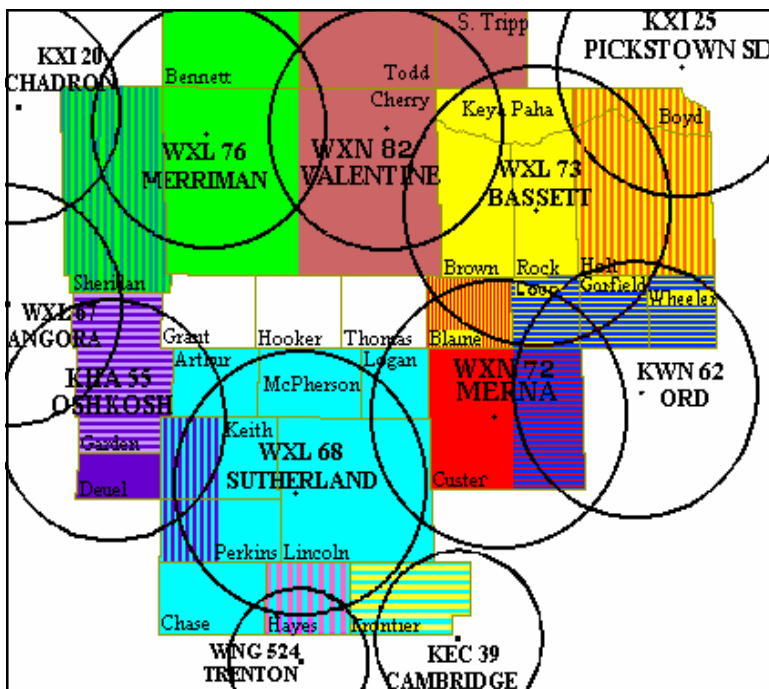
By Christopher Bannan JMET



It is 230 am and everyone is asleep. All of a sudden you are awoken by this loud annoying alarm. Yep it happens to everyone and more so in the south where severe weather can happen around the clock. This alarm wakes you up and alerts you to the threat of severe weather, which could be heading your way. This broadcast system that sends out the warning, sends them out on something called the NOAA Weather Radio (NWR). NWR is a nationwide radio network for 24 hour broadcasting of weather information. This broadcast comes directly from a nearby National Weather Service (NWS) office, like here in North Platte. NWR broadcasts many NWS products. Watches, warnings, advisories, hourly weather round-ups, short term forecasts and the forecast zones are the main products played through NWR. In addition Public Information Statements (PNS), Special Weather Statements (SPS), Civil Emergency Messages (CEM) and Fire weather products are broadcasted from time to time. In actuality NWR is known as "The Voice of The National Weather Service"

Working with the Federal Communication Commission's (FCC) Emergency Alert System, NWR is an "all hazards" radio network, making it your single source for comprehensive weather and emergency information. Not only does NWR broadcast hazardous watches and warnings, it also provides other post information on natural hazards such as earthquakes and volcano activity. NWR also handles environmental hazards and CEM's such as chemical leaks, spills, and even Amber alerts. These watches, warnings, and CEM's are tone alerted will cut into the regular broadcast cycle to give you up to the minute information about these hazards and emergencies.

NWR is provided as a public service by NOAA, which is part of the Department of Commerce. There are over 900 NWR transmitters across the Continental United States, Alaska, Hawaii, and territories such as Puerto Rico, the US Virgin Islands, and Guam. NWR requires a special radio receiver or scanner capable of picking up on the signal. There are 7 different frequencies (Mhz) that NWR broadcast on. Within the North Platte County Warning Area (CWA) there is 6 different transmitters which provide weather and emergency information for north-central, west-central, southwestern Nebraska and portions of the panhandle. Along with Nebraska some of our transmitters also provide service to south-central South Dakota. To ensure there is coverage across some counties, there are 6 other transmitters outside the CWA which provide extra coverage to parts of the panhandle, central and southwestern Nebraska. On page 4 is a picture of NWR coverage across the our Warning area.



Transmitters within the CWA

Call Sign	Frequency
WXL68	162.550
WXL73	162.475
WXL76	162.400
WXL82	162.450
WXN72	162.500
KHA55	162.525

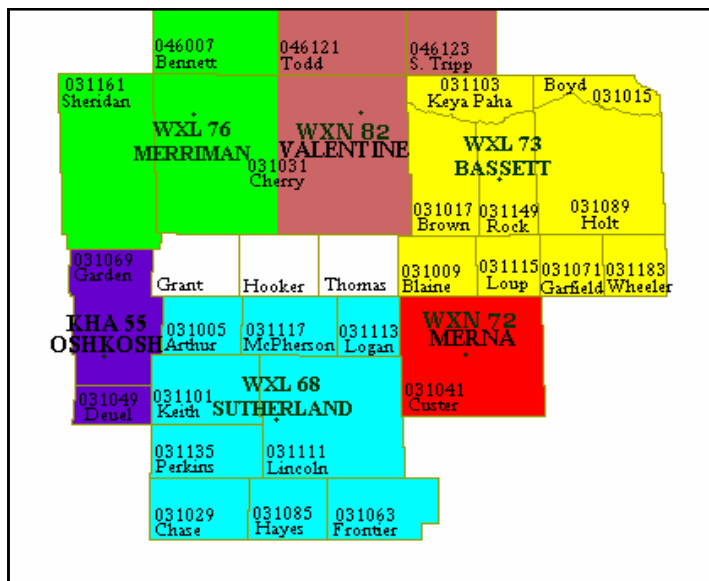
Transmitters outside the CWA

Call Sign	Frequency
KWN62	162.525
KXI20	162.525
KXI25	162.425
WXL67	162.475
WNG524	162.500
KEC39	162.525

SAME Radio Information and FIPS Codes

Most weather radio receivers will alarm for any weather watches or warnings within a transmitter broadcast area. To eliminate alarms for counties except those counties which concern you, SAME technology is available.

SAME is short for Specific Area Message Encoder. With SAME technology, the listener can program his or her radio to tone alert for only those county(ies) designated by the listener. These radios are available at most electronic or hardware stores and are priced from 30 to 100 dollars. In order for a SAME Weather Radio to tone alert properly one of the following codes must be programmed into your weather radio receiver.



Curtis

By Christina Hannon MIT

In a recent visit to the Easter City, Curtis, Nebraska I had a pleasant talk with Lorinda Elson while her Fisher Porter was being prepared for the summer. Lorinda has been taking observations for 11 years since taking over after the loss of her husband. Before the equipment was moved, in 1985, to the Elson residence three miles north-northeast of Curtis, the Crawford family was responsible for the Curtis records starting in 1948. Soon after the equipment was moved outside of town, cattle owned by the Elson's neighbor got loose and damaged the Fisher Porter. Mr. Elson then put a small wooden fence around the Fisher Porter, as seen below, and there have been no incidences since.



During our talk, Lorinda asked which way Jim Sweet and I came into town. Being new to the area I was unaware of any other route besides Highway 83. I now know that there is a much more scenic route to Curtis which takes one through the Cottonwood Canyon. Driving south from Maxwell you are bound to see some interesting wildlife including elk, bobcats, and deer. I will warn you that the route is unpaved, but I have found many roads in Nebraska are such.

The local paper prints the temperature and precipitation for the previous week supplied by Lorinda. The area locals are appreciative to have such data and missed the observations when the paper stopped reporting for a brief period. When Lorinda has completed taking her daily observations she stays busy as a substitute teacher, of any grade level in Curtis, and as a tutor. She has barnyard cats roaming around the yard, two black house cats, and a daughter who is a senior in high school involved with track and field and looking to continue that interest at college next year. Two other daughters are grown and have moved away. The eldest has completed her master's degree and is living in Columbus and the other is in her second year of college, pursuing a pre-medical degree at the University of Nebraska, Kearney.

All Time Records		Monthly and Yearly Averages							
High		High	Low	Precip		High	Low	Precip	
114 degrees on Jul 11, 1954		Jan	37.8	9.3	0.43	Jul	90.3	60.2	2.89
		Feb	44.1	14.1	0.50	Aug	88.5	57.5	2.40
Low		Mar	53.1	22.5	1.35	Sep	80.1	46.0	1.55
-36 degrees on Feb 12, 1899		Apr	64.3	32.5	1.99	Oct	68.2	32.9	1.25
		May	73.3	44.5	3.29	Nov	49.8	20.1	0.84
Precipitation		Jun	84.3	54.7	3.30	Dec	40.1	11.6	0.38
5.10 inches on Jun 22, 1947		30 Year Averages							
		High	64.5		Low	33.8		Mean	49.2
Snow									
21.0 inches on Mar 29, 1901		Precip	20.17"				Snow	27.0"	

COOP AWARDS



Don Liebert was honored with an award at his home in Sargent in January. Mr. Liebert has been taking precipitation measurements for the town of Sargent for 30 years. The award was presented by Ronald Burns and Christina Hannon.

Records for Sargent began in November of 1971.



Judy Scholbohm was honored with an award by Jim Sweet. Judy has been the COOP observer in Oshkosh for 25 years. The records for temperature and precipitation have been in her family since 1948.

Records for Oshkosh began in June of 1913.

Length of Service Awards to be presented throughout the year include:

- Joan and Thomas Erxleben in Bartlett (10 years)
- Larry and Janice Halsted in Lynch (10 years)
- Deanna Brummet, 5W of Stapleton (15 years)
- James Rempe in Oconto (20 years)
- Ansel Ellis in Merriman (25 years)
- Gilbert Koch, 2NW of Eustis (35 years)



Ronald Burns (above) investigating the upcoming length of service award recipients.

FAVORITE RECIPE SECTION

Calling all cooks!

By Mary White ASA

It is my opinion that Nebraska women are the world's best cooks! So, let's share recipes – I will publish your recipes in our quarterly newsletter. Please include a little ditty about your favorite recipe and about yourself – I just love making new friends!

Submit your favorite recipe's to me, Mary White, Administrative Assistant here at the National Weather Service Office in North Platte, Nebraska. My email address is mary.white@noaa.gov or you can send the recipe in the mail via the address on the last page of the newsletter.

I'll Start: I have lived in North Platte my whole life and come from a large family of 12, I am the oldest daughter and the second oldest in my family – I am married and have 3 children and 5 grandchildren. Now when I cook for my family there are always lots of leftovers. Just this year I went to a potluck and I noticed that everyone went crazy over this one dish, I kept hearing comments on how great the green dish was and once I tried it I knew why – WOW! So, here it is, The Green Dish Recipe (real title-Three Layer Dessert)

Three Layer Dessert

1st layer

1 cup of flour
½ cup of melted margarine or butter
½ cup of chopped walnuts

Mix & pat into 9x13 pan, bake at 350° for 15 min.
Cool completely.

2nd layer

1 8oz. Pkg. softened cream cheese
1 cup powdered sugar
1 cup cool whip

Mix together until smooth; Spread on 1st layer

3rd layer

2 small pkgs. instant pistachio pudding
3 cups milk

Mix together; beat until thick, pour over 2nd layer
Chill several hours (overnight)
Spread top with cool whip and ENJOY!

COOP 2005 WEATHER CALENDER

WE NEED YOUR HELP!!!!

We are looking for weather photos taken during all times of the year for a 2005 COOP calendar. If you have any photos you would like to see included, please send them to our office. We will return the photos promptly. If you have a story that goes along with the photo, send that along as well.





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Check out our website at
www.crh.noaa.gov/lbf